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LADS AND SONGS  
OF SPAIN

LEONARD WILLIAMS



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BALLADS AND SONGS OF SPAIN



# BALLADS AND SONGS OF SPAIN

BY

LEONARD WILLIAMS

AUTHOR OF "THE LAND OF THE  
DONS," ETC.

**Second Edition, Enlarged**

LONDON

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1903

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## P R E F A C E



WHEN I state on the title-page that this is a Second and Enlarged Edition, I mean that the work was published, in a shorter form, six years ago.

LEONARD WILLIAMS.

1903.



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# BALLADS AND SONGS OF SPAIN



## A CALL TO ARMS

THE accompanying ballad represents a summons to arms supposed to have been received by the *alcayde* or commandant of some fortress in possession of the Christians—one of those grim strongholds poised on the lofty crags that border the fertile Vegas, or plains, of Granada or Malaga.

These fortresses, the ruins of many of which may still be spied throughout the provinces of Andalusia, were, in the period preceding the siege of Granada, of vast importance to either conflicting power, as through their underlying passes alone could the Moors prosecute their forays into Christian territory, or the latter urge their convoys of provisions or trains of artillery to join the beleaguering armies of King Ferdinand.

These commandingly posted strongholds, then, or rather what is left of them—for the battering of heavy ordnance has tumbled the greater part

into the valleys at their feet—lie, generally speaking, in a semicircular chain, extending from the vicinity of Ronda to the Axarquia, and following the minor heights of the Sierra Nevada and Sierra Morena to bend again towards the sea behind Malaga ; and the plateau they enclose was the seat of the bitterest of the struggles between the rival creeds and empires of Moham-medanism and Christianity.

Alhama, Baza, Jaen, Denia, Moclin, Salobreña—such are the names of a few of these sentinels of the stony Sierras, and more than one of them is known to have been garrisoned as early as the age of Roderick the Goth—three hundred years, that is to say, before the Norman invasion of England.

Yet, in dealing with Spain, it is by no means necessary to retrace the events of many centuries in order to reach an abundant source of inspiration for the poet, and a point where history and romance will be found to have become perilously interwoven.

The writer of the present notes and verses may claim to understand the Spanish character, so far as a foreigner may understand a people incapable of wholly understanding one another, for many of the Spaniards are as capricious as

little children, as destitute as they of the power of care or thought, as changeful as butterflies that skip from flower to flower, nor have remembrance in their present mouthful for what they sipped the last.

And this is why, coming to a point on which I would particularly insist, it is easy to glean as much romance from Spanish records of the fifteenth century as from British chronicles of several hundred years earlier. For, in notable opposition to the spirit of our own insular conservatism, the Spaniard, though proud to a degree, is not, nor ever has been, conservative of national facts. It is the colour rather than the texture of events that excites his interest. All that glitters is, for him, gold. He is an echo of the climate of his native land;—his laughter, his love of pleasure, his lightheartedness—these are as perennial as the smiling skies above his head. His serious moods are as evanescent as an Andalusian shower.

It will readily be understood, therefore, that as a rule an Englishman is not well fitted to criticise, with any claim to authority, this singular and interesting people, their transient ways and inclinations, their momentary periods of alternate inaction and activity, their jealous mistrust of

strangers, their inordinate pride, that leads them as often as not to construe Trafalgar into a demi-victory, and the rout of the Armada into a mere accident of wind and wave.

The writer or traveller who encounters these curiosities of judgment will have to exhibit, in order to view them with justice and profit, a remarkable store of patience and of largeness and liberality of spirit. And I am constrained to affirm that, in my opinion, Englishmen are not generally gifted with tolerance for the shortcomings of other nations, except in somewhat rare instances where travel has been employed as a vehicle, not for adverse criticism, bigotry, or condemnation, but for self-instruction.

The Spaniards are indeed a people of contradictions. Magnanimous in trivial matters, in operations of national importance they alienate others and lose themselves through mere selfishness, vanity, and greed. They possess, too, the additional disadvantage of being a people neither fit to govern themselves nor to be governed by others. The remembrance of their greatness in the past, so far from being with them a stimulus to resolutely endeavour to perpetuate that lustre, is in their eyes an ample justification for continuous indolence in the present. In short,



they seek to feed themselves on empty pride, without the nutritive substance of exertion.

So that, admitting the temper of a people to represent, only in a more permanent degree, the temper of its individuals, it will at once be evident that the student of Spanish history must either contrive to keep clear of much that is irritating and prohibitive to a just conception of the national character, or else fit himself to attribute to these distortions and discrepancies their just value and no more.

If he wants to get at the germ of all that is best in the Spanish nature, he will find that he must seek it in the homes and home intercourse of the lower classes, who are the salt of the country; and from these, rather than from written records, he will acquire most of what is reliable, vivid and instructive in the story of an imaginative and picturesque nation, for there are stories that are fitter to be sung than written—and of these is the story of Spain.

From the lips, then, of men who can neither read nor write, he will hear the traditions of their forefathers detailed in splendid and ardent language, with scrupulous regard for truth—so far, indeed, as a Spaniard's coloured view of things long past may be said to comprehend the

meaning of the word "truth"; so far as a man for whom adjectives exist in the superlative degree alone may achieve the art of tolerant narration. If, in the fine frenzy of romance with which he frames his glowing words, you would find the essence of historic truth, you may find it—if you have set yourself to learn in what temper to look for it.

From the mouths of this people alone will you profitably learn their history. The plaintive *Malagueña*, the song no stranger may acquire, sung by some lowly Spanish woman as she plies the needle, or rocks the cradle of her child—this song will teach you more than piles of document or priestly chronicle. With its Moorish cadences and mournful intonations, her song will bring before your mind and senses the memory of fair Granada desolate,—“el ultimo sospiro del Moro,”—fight and fire, death and exile, captivity, and change of faith, and intermarriage, and the welding of two creeds and characters,—all this her song will tell.

For, believe me, every Spaniard is a rhapsodist at heart, and bears the ballads of his native land upon his eager lips—to voice them to the hearing of posterity.

## A CALL TO ARMS

YON fellow says the bold Marqués,\*  
With trusty comrades four,  
This day hath ta'en a thousand men  
And sendeth me for more.

By God's dear grace he goes to face  
The infidels that lie  
Upon the Vega's smiling space,  
The hosts of Mawmetry.

O well I know the gallant four  
That with his pennon be ;  
I wager good Montemayor  
Hath borne him company ;

And Santiago's lord hath heard  
The fame of fight afar,  
And Cabra's Count, and to him spurred,  
And valiant Aguilar ;

\* Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marquis of Cadiz.

And these have sent their knightly word  
That I this day shall go,  
And men-at-arms and help afford,  
And by them fight also.

This day the summer breeze afar  
Shall blow the battle din  
From mountain heights to Malaga,  
From Ronda to Moclin.

This day shall spread the battle roar,  
This day shall thrill the fight  
From Estepona of the shore  
To steep Alhama's height.

Your barbs shall sniff the charge this day,  
This day your souls shall hear  
The ring of lance and targe's play,  
Of sword and cimeter.

This day our bands shall muster where  
Twin standards reel and toss  
Upon an angered atmosphere,  
The Crescent and the Cross.

Go, saddle each his trusty steed,  
Go, buckle each his sword,  
And lace his corselet with all speed—  
Each soldier of the Lord.

Look well each brand be keen and bright,  
Look to your horses' gear,  
And trim your arrows for the fight,  
And sharpen each his spear.

Each gird him on his whetted brand,  
And trust himself this day  
To God's and to his own right hand  
To guard the Faith away.

Thou, Lord of Ages, shield our host  
And unto us draw near,  
So greater might than Moor may boast  
Shall grace each good arm here,

So every stroke shall whistle sure  
To lay a heathen low,  
To cleave the carcase of a Moor  
From helm to saddle-bow.

As soon a mountain torrent's course  
For sandy grain shall stay,  
So up and arm—to horse! to horse!  
And smite the Moor this day.

Or if ye fall, a warrior's death—  
What more do ye desire—  
In glory, fighting for the Faith,  
What nobler end—what higher?

By angel voices ye shall hear  
Your praises clearly given,  
And win your knighthood of the Lord,  
Your golden spurs in Heaven !

## THE DEATH OF ALONZO DE AGUILAR

AMONG the narratives, half legendary, half historical, which deal with the unsettled period succeeding the fall of Granada, one of the most attractive and conspicuous is that of the death of Alonzo de Aguilar, who, with the possible exception of the great Marquis of Cadiz, figures as the most conspicuously vigorous and valiant member of all the chivalrous array that mustered in the holy cause of Christendom.

This brilliant cavalier, who, from the account of contemporary chroniclers, seems to have been the pattern of all a Christian knight should be, was deservedly prized by his sovereign, who, never slow to recognise intelligence and loyalty in his subjects, was wont to award him an honourable post in battle, and to lend a heedful ear to his counsel in time of peace ; or rather, such transient apologies for peace as were afforded by the intervals that fell between the close of

one spring and summer campaign, and the resumption of hostilities in the ensuing year.

With the prowess of Don Alonzo de Aguilar throughout the Crusades themselves (for Crusades in every sense of the word they were), these observations and the ensuing ballad have nothing to do. An exact and presumably reliable account of his exploits may be found in numerous chronicles of those holy wars, both in the Spanish and other tongues, showing, in better and ampler language than these brief notes might exhibit, his merit in the council-chamber and in the field of battle.

But with the surrender of Granada, the voices of several of the more accessible historians become suddenly dumb, as if a mighty faith were capable of being proselytized at a single blow, or a great people of being reduced to a tranquil, immediate, and passive subjection by the mere capitulation of their capital.

As a matter of fact, the Moors of those mountainous regions remote from Granada continued for many years more turbulent and unmanageable, if anything, than if that city had never fallen. They revenged themselves by savage assaults upon any defenceless or numerically inferior bodies of Christians that might



chance from time to time to come into their power, occupying meanwhile such rugged and impregnable positions as rendered a rapid and reliable translation of the tidings of their misdeeds, or subsequent pursuit and chastisement by the forces of the Christian sovereigns, a matter of grave difficulty.

At length, however, things came to such a pass that Ferdinand issued orders for the furtherance, from Cordova, of an expedition in pursuit of these exasperating infidels, the said expedition to be under the joint leadership of the Counts of Cifuentes and Ureña, and Don Alonzo de Aguilar, "of the House of the Eagle." These cavaliers had instructions to pursue a body of the rebels who were known to occupy a strong, though presumably unfortified position on a lofty and precipitous range in the neighbourhood of the Serranía, or mountainous country, of Ronda. These are the Sierra Bermeja or Red Mountains, which, starting from immediately behind Ronda, run due southwards to the Mediterranean, intersecting a thinly-populated part of the province of Andalusia.

I have thoroughly explored these steep and desolate heights in search of the probable site of the disaster which these notes and verses

illustrate. One mountain in particular may well have been the fatal spot. It is of commanding elevation, standing apart from, and slightly in advance of, its fellows, so that for this reason it is more prominently visible from Gibraltar, and, though abrupt on all surrounding sides, encloses within its hollow apex a level, treeless plateau, a mile or more in length and breadth. There is no other summit of the range but would be wholly unsuited to a combat of several hundred men, so it is not assuming too much to suppose that this is where the gallant Aguilar met his end.

Contrary to the usual custom of the Spaniards, Don Alonzo and his comrades-in-arms seem on this occasion to have adopted the resolution, possibly demanded by the circumstances of the Moslem situation, of storming this natural stronghold of the infidels; a dangerous experiment, since the Moors had become by this time eminently mountain fighters, and full of wariness and practised stratagem in this mode of warfare. Be that as it may, the engagement was extended over many hours, up to the very summit of the mountain, and along the plateau which it encloses. Far into the night the conflict raged, by which time, according to the general belief, the Chris-

tians had been partially routed and pursued, few indeed escaping, though such as were emboldened to stand their ground contrived to rally to the number of two hundred. Noting the fewness of the remnant exposed to them, the Moors redoubled their attack, and in the end this devoted band of warriors perished to a man, the last survivor being Don Alonzo himself, who, covered with wounds, and with the blood streaming through the joints of his armour, breathed his last in the very act of single combat with a Moor of terrific strength and towering stature—El Feri of Ben Estepar himself, the leader of the infidels.

It is an inspiring thought to picture the intrepid soldier as having so gloriously fallen on these now silent heights, that seem yet nearer to the powers of Heaven than those of Earth, and from whose desolate elevation, if the weather be fine, the eye of the traveller roams over a vast expanse of peerless Andalusia, over tracts of mountain, and foothill, and valley, and deeply azure sea, past the cork-woods of Almoraima to Algeciras, the “green islet” of old; thence across the bay of Gibraltar to the grey rock of Calpe, and over the straits, studded with many a sail, to old Tangier, and the shores of Barbary. It

is all like an inestimably lovely picture, that needed but one cunning master-stroke to make it perfect as an earthly thing may be, and lo ! in the radiant, overcrowning summer sky, that stroke is made. It is a prospect never to forget.

Such places as these, we like to think, has God most providently given—to be the graves of heroes.

THE DEATH OF ALONZO  
DE AGUILAR

YE may have seen those rocky crests  
From Gibel-tarik's \* height  
That from the steep Sierra's breasts  
Go shelving to the right,

And jagged up and down are driven  
In strange variety  
Of peak fantastic, now toward Heaven,  
Now plunging to the sea.

One regal mount o'er-gazeth all—  
A barrier broad and great  
Of precipice and pinnacle,  
Superbly isolate :

Ye well may view the wintry snow  
Upon this summit shed,  
Or when the morn or afterglow  
Dyeth his shoulders red ;

\* Gibraltar.

And often, though no mist be near,  
Nor rain nor shadows fall,  
There resteth on this mountain drear,  
A curtain like a pall.

Thou art a Spaniard, Manuel,  
And wilt have heard, I know,  
Thy friends oft tell what there befell  
Four hundred years ago.

But I will count it once again,  
That Englishmen may hear  
How patriot hearts have bled for Spain  
In battle sinister.

It was a goodly cavalcade  
That issued forth to war,  
One mellow morning, through the shade  
Of stately Cordova—

A mellow morn, a morn in Spring,  
A fair unfickle day,  
And silken flags were fluttering  
Along the sunlit way.

Yet many an anxious eye was bent  
On many a loved one there,  
And sweetheart's message slyly sent  
To many a warrior dear ;

And matron lowly, blushing maid,  
And dame of high degree,  
With heart's accord to Mary prayed  
To guard that chivalry.

Of Counts a pair were glittering there  
On champing stallions twain,  
And Don Alonzo rode anear—  
That famous knight of Spain—

Whose flag hath never turned in war  
Nor back to enemy ;  
God speed thee, gallant Aguilar,  
And all thy company !

Now as the city gate they passed—  
That armament, and strode  
To beat of drum and trumpet blast  
Along the level road—

The sun blazed white upon the right  
With many a flashing fire  
From armour bright of lord, and knight,  
And arquebusier,

And lit the goodly host and made  
A splendid sight to see,  
While gay pavilions displayed  
All colourings that be.

Lo ! they have lost the city's view  
With sturdy step, and ta'en  
The way that lies the Vega through  
By many a smiling plain,

While peasant schooled to war's alarms  
From many a cottage door  
Prays Heaven's blessing on their arms  
Against the thieving Moor.

So twice a moonlit night they spent  
And twice a dusty day  
In weary march, ere eyes were bent  
Upon the foe's array :

Till where a mountain stream rolls loud,  
Their eager outlook fell  
At last on Arab charger proud,  
And turbaned infidel.

Then, as with sudden drops of rain  
That tell of tempests near,  
That stream was flecked with gradual stain  
Upon its bosom clear ;

Till Christians, foot and horse, o'erleapt  
The channel of the rill,  
And burst upon the Moor, and swept  
His squadrons up the hill,



And drove the unbeliever's host  
Up many a mountain side,  
While pennons tossed and lives were lost  
Upon the battle's tide.

For seven long hours those warring powers  
To spear and sword-stroke swung,  
While cloudy arrows hummed in showers  
From whizzing crossbow sprung.

Where never coloured thing did float  
Upon the breath of Spring,  
Save fallen hair of mountain goat,  
Or plume from eagle's wing.

Now thrice a hundred pennons, red  
And blue, and amber, toss,  
With one white standard e'er upspread—  
The Banner of the Cross.

But, for the battle veered apace,  
A lonely mountain height  
And broad they gained, a level space,  
As fell the shades of night ;

There with the crimson rays of sun  
That marked the dying day,  
Full many an one whose strength was done  
Poured Life's bright hues away ;

There, with the dark, both Christian true  
And foeman of the Faith  
The same sad uniform o'er drew—  
The sable garb of Death.

But they whose sword was for the Lord  
Were but as one to ten,  
Though striving yet, in blood and sweat,  
In peril and in pain,

Till, when the sudden moon her rays  
Upon their carnage shed,  
They wavered for a fatal space—  
And turned, and broke, and fled.

The shadow of a flight—they turned,  
They turned to flee, but then  
Their leader's voice their hearts discerned  
And rallied them again.

“For God and Santiago's sake  
That stand our arms anear  
Now turn to me—new courage take  
And bide the issue here!”

And none that heard his voice but shamed  
Unto his call replied,  
And with a battle-cry acclaimed,  
And rallied at his side.

So weak, and spent, and faint, and rent  
With wounds, though strong in faith,  
All undismayed those heroes stayed  
To face the sight of Death.

So stood they, fighting to the last  
In harness hacked and riven,  
Nor wavered as each proud soul passed  
Upon its path to Heaven.

And Aguilar—men say that he,  
The bravest knight of all  
That sold their lives so precious,  
The latest was to fall.

With feet that slipped in heathen blood,  
Swinging a blood-red sword,  
All grand and resolute he stood,  
That servant of the Lord.

While surely as a careful clock  
Doth passing seconds tell,  
He with each wide, unwearying stroke  
Drove some new soul to Hell.

So may ye see a reaper mow  
With scythe or sickle keen,  
And tramp the stubble, where but now  
Hath waved the living grain.

To right, to left, the good blade cleft,—  
Two blows—two heathen slain—  
Two bloody trunks of breath bereft  
Upon the slippery plain.

With whistle clear that good blade sheer  
Through flesh and steel made way,  
As though to bid his master cheer  
For such festivity :

Till one, a stalwart infidel,  
His prowess spied afar,  
And on him fell with savage yell  
And sweeping scimitar ;

And others stood expectant by  
To mark those champions twain,—  
The lustiest chief of Barbary,  
The doughtiest knight of Spain.

But he whom celebrates this song  
Was yielding tardily  
To stress of wounds and battle long,  
And dropped upon one knee ;

Yet even thence he thrust so sure,  
And with so fierce a will,  
It seemed as if the strength of four  
Lay in that stout arm still ;

But lo ! his brand he casteth by  
And riseth for a space,  
And flings him on his enemy  
In desperate embrace.

"Now yield," the conquering Moslem cries,  
"To him of Estepar."  
"Yield thou to me," his foe replies—  
"The knight of Aguilar."

And uttering such menace he  
Uttered his latest breath  
And perished, with his enemy  
Fast interlocked in death.

---

When setting suns industrious stand  
Those peaks with fire to fill,  
The spirit of that blood-red brand  
Shines in those mountains still.

There breathe his requiem afar,  
Grey clouds and silver rain,  
To rest the soul of Aguilar,  
The stoutest heart in Spain.

There still the wet mists weeping drift,  
There still the sad winds moan—  
But the spirit of the Eagle swift  
To Paradise hath flown.

## THE BATTLE OF THE GUADALETE

THE date of the battle of Xeres, or the Guadalete, is variously given by historians, though A.D. 714 seems to figure most prominently in Arab and Spanish chronicles.

In or about that year, it is certain, the way to the subjugation of Spain was paved by the capture and battle of the Mons Calpe, our modern Gibraltar. The Arab forces were under the command of Tarik el Tuerto, a fierce and experienced captain, who appears to have inspired his dexterous, swarthy horsemen with a good deal of that zeal for conquest which had long been a leading trait in the character of the more ambitious of the Moslem chieftains. This and other proved qualities led to his selection by the Caliph Waled at Damascus, of which city Tarik was a native, for so perilous an undertaking.

The scanty forces opposed to this general after his landing at Tarifa and occupation of the further promontory, which, in an altered form,

bears his name to the present day, were under the leadership of the young Prince Ataulpho, of the Gothic blood royal, and Theodomir, a veteran of established courage and loyalty. These offered a desperate resistance to the invader, considering the vast inferiority of the troops at their disposal ; for the Goths had sunk into a complete and shameful effeminacy, and were by no means fit to cope with the picked forces of Barbary—soldiers who, in addition to outnumbering their opponents, were inured to every hardship and schooled in every stratagem ; men, in short, whose sole profession was the art and exercise of war.

The Christian army was signally routed, the Prince Ataulpho slain, and the Moorish leader moved on, unopposed, to further conquest. All Theodomir could do was to send an urgent message to King Roderick, entreating him to hasten in person, with such a force as he could muster, in the direction of the threatened districts.

King Roderick, roused to unwonted energy by this disastrous missive, and foreseeing that the Moors must be immediately and decisively checked, or that irretrievable ruin would follow, contrived to gather within a few days an army



whose numbers, according to the favoured simile of the ancients, "were as the sands of the sea for multitude." The horse were over fifty thousand strong. Of the foot soldiery, I cannot find that any historian has ventured to give even an estimate, so vast a host were they. But a large majority lacked arms or defensive armour, and the whole force, with the exception of a few cavaliers of noble blood and fortuitously vigorous training, stood in need of discipline and a knowledge of the principles of war.

With this unsatisfactory and unwieldy following, the king took the field, and at once marched to meet the forces of the invader, starting from that ancient city of Cordova, which bears so old and honourable a record among the annals of the stormy Spains.

The battle of the Guadalete, which ranks in importance even prior to the memorable day of Navas de Tolosa, took place on the banks of the river whose name it commonly bears, and was opened by the skirmishing parties of King Roderick, their sharp encounters with the advance guards of the infidels leading ultimately to a general engagement. The contest raged fiercely for many hours (or as some say, though this is probably an exaggeration, days), for the Chris-

tians, fighting for all a patriot has to love and live for—home, religion, wife, children, everything that is pre-eminently dear to the affections—struggled with the valour of despair.

All at once, at a moment when the Moors seemed to be giving way before the frantic onset of their assailants, a whole wing of the Christian army, headed by Oppas, Bishop of Seville, went over to the enemy.

This prelate, whose name, together with that of his brother-in-law, Julian—lord of Gezira Alhadra, the present Algeciras—will live to eternal infamy in the history of Spain, had been in secret communication with his apostate relative, and this was the course they had agreed upon between them to give their native land into the hands of the unbeliever.

For only a short time since had the traitor Count, the accursed for all time in the hearts of Spaniards, sworn a bitter vengeance against Don Roderick. The cause of the offence is uncertain. Till recently it was alleged to have been the dishonour, by the king, of Julian's daughter, Florinda, but the historical evidence is not sufficient to render this in stronger light than that of a myth. It is related almost exclusively by the Arab chroniclers, and bears, to a careful eye,

traces of too romantic a colouring to be in any great degree trustworthy. This matters not. That a personal wrong should be made a ground for the betrayal of one's country cannot but be regarded as iniquitous and without excuse.

With the defection of Julian's priestly accomplice from the Christian ranks, the battle was virtually at an end. The Moslems were, from that moment, lords of Spain. Such of the Spanish chivalry as were left continued, it is true, to fight to the last, the king himself, it is recorded, being prominent among them by his valour and resistance, but when the night closed over such a scene of slaughter as that fair land has seldom witnessed, even in the stormiest of her stormy campaigns, the Christian army was no more.

What became of Roderick himself is unknown. Tradition has it that he escaped from the fatal field and lived a hermit's life in remote parts of Spain; and that he died and was buried in Portugal. There is a chronicle which says:—

“El Chronicon de San Millan, que llega hasta el año 883, deze que, hasta su tiempo, se ignora el fin del rey Rodrigo. Pocos años despues, el rey Don Alonzo el Magno, aviendo ganado la ciudad de Viseo, encontró en una

iglesia el epitafio que en romance dize—‘Aqui yaze Rodrigo, ultimo rey de los Godos.’”

“The Chronicle of St. Millan, which reaches down to the year 883, says that at that date nothing was known of the end of King Roderick. But, a few years later, King Alfonso the Great, having captured the city of Viseo (in Portugal), found, in a church, the Latin epitaph which says,—

“‘Here lies Roderick, the last King of the Goths.’”

## GUADALETE

GUADALETE, sullen river,  
Witness of that angry day,  
When the sword of a deceiver  
Bled thy country's life away,

Why so darkly, why so slowly,  
Seawards, river, windest thou?  
Hath that massacre unholy  
Stained the silver on thy brow?

Is it still that Memory shames thee  
Into silence? Truly saith  
Arab chronicler that names thee  
"*Guadalete—Stream of Death.*"

## THE HOUSE OF CASTRO

THERE is still standing in Granada city a house of ancient and noble aspect, evidently the former residence of some grandee of Spain. It is particularly noticeable by reason of an old window, bearing over it the following inscription, carved in stone,—

“Esperándola del Cielo.”

“Awaiting her in Heaven.”

There is a dim pathos and mystery about the sonorous Castilian that hit my fancy not a little, so I took pains to gather from various sources its legend and significance. It is a story little known to strangers, and probably not one in a thousand of the tourists that pass the window by, know—or even suspect—aught of the brief and awful warning spoken on the verge of death. From the very bars that intersect the carving, and in the presence of his betrothed, we are given to believe the guilty page was swung.

The actors in the tragedy have gone the way of all flesh, and centuries have passed and faded, yet one is brought to hope—such is the proud nobility within the deeply graven words—that, obedient to their promise, the lady and her lover have met again by now, and keep their tryst in Heaven.

## THE HOUSE OF CASTRO

THE Count of Castro—men have ta'en  
Him word his daughter fair,  
A serving-page her love doth gain ;  
They bide their tryst anear.

The night was late—his sword he took  
And armed soldiers four  
That with their pikes the bolt have broke  
That bars her chamber door.

“ Ye should have opened, daughter dear,  
Good news I bring to thee.  
This very hour, while I am here,  
Your bridal-show shall be.

“ Yon page that serves on bended knee  
A menial task in hall,  
Hath set himself the task to be  
My proudest serf of all ;



“ And will he claim my daughter's hand  
Or in her chamber tread ?  
O not on Earth, Sir Ferdinand,  
In Heaven ye twain shall wed.

“ Ho ! merry men that work my will,  
Go bid a rope prepare,  
And make it fast to yonder sill  
And tie his marriage there.

“ Then bear my daughter hence,” he said ;—  
They raised her from the ground,  
Yet was she as a maiden dead  
For lying in a swoond,

As who had marked in sorrowing mood  
Her father's kindling face,  
And knew that from his sentence rude  
No pity was, nor grace.

O well knew she for her loved sake  
Her lover dear must die,  
And she must lonely penance make  
And mourn his memory.

“ Sir page, ere yonder moon shall spring  
Above the pine-tree top,  
From yonder window must thou swing  
Thy lifeless body drop—

"A moment for thy marriage prayer!"  
So spake the angry lord,  
And found his vengeance passing fair,  
And laughed, and sheathed his sword.

O but he mocked, and mocking bade  
Him pray—yet ne'er prayed he,  
But only haughty menace made  
To that stern company.

"The bitter death ye bid me dree,  
'Twill cost ye dear to-morrow,  
Ye doom me to Eternity,—  
To bliss—yourselves to sorrow :

"Nor think to take from me the thing  
Most dear of all that be,  
Ere many a day that I shall swing  
From yonder balcony ;

"Ere many a sun and moon be set,  
Or breeze shall droop and die,  
My lady-love and I shall meet  
And hold our tryst on high.

"By this, the death ye mete to me  
God hath my sins forgiven—  
I surely at my post shall be  
*Awaiting her in Heaven."*

## AL SAID\*

THE camp was a-slumber, the breezes were laid,  
The Arabs a-dining, in the shadows reclining  
From the white summer heat—but they sprang  
to their feet

At a warning—a whisper—"Al Said ! Al Said !"

"I have seen his white war-horse  
A-rest on the sward—  
He is whetting the edge  
Of his broad battle-sword.

"I have seen his grim comrades,  
Their lances' bright sheen,  
Each pennon-hue dances  
Through forest leaves green.

"Ye have seen—ye have felt him—  
The flash of his brand,  
To the death-dealing stroke  
Of his heavy right hand.

\* The Moorish name of "The Cid"—Rodrigo de Bivar.

"He shall smite and o'ertake ye—  
I heard his lips say—  
Your plunder forsake ye  
To save you this day.

"Ye have seen—ye have felt him—  
Will ye meet him again?  
Ye are weaker and fewer,  
But one to his ten.

"The race of the storm-rack  
Is tardier than he  
To furrow the track  
Of an enemy."—

The hooves of their stallions  
Strike clouds from the earth  
That have veiled the rider  
From helmet to girth,

Those whirling battalions  
A-galloping go  
Like an arrow half-seen  
As it leaveth the bow.

They have cloven the pass  
Like the measureless blast  
Of the gale, or the streak  
Of a javelin's cast.

In hurry and fear  
The word they obeyed,  
The whisper—"Al Said !  
Al Said is near !"

## VÆ MALACCAE !

(POST URBIS DEDITIONEM)

MALAGA ! Malaga ! how art thou fallen—Queen  
of the southern cities ;

Thy pomegranate trees blossom not, neither do  
they bring forth their fruit,

Thy citron-groves and myrtles — are they not  
barren and desolate indeed ?

For thee the oranges shall bloom not, neither  
again the flowers of the field.

Desert are all thy ways, the fountains in thy  
paved courts are dumb.

Though thou art young and dear, and beautiful  
as Heaven,

For thee the summer dews shall make lament  
and weep, and winter rains,

For Azrael's icy touch is on thy heart, from  
whom is no deliverance,

Not even by God's own Hand, nor yet His  
Prophet's whom thou hast forsworn.

Cursed shall be thy bridal in the arms of the  
unbeliever ;

The storms shall be thy canopy, and the weeping  
floods thy pillow ;  
Rough seas shall be thy ministers—in anger  
they shall foam upon thee,—  
In wrath the angels of the Lord shall fold their  
wings, nor stoop to kiss thy forehead ;  
For thee the stars shall shine not, neither the  
gracious sun,  
Nor the pale moons that light the pathways of  
the Lord's beloved.  
It is God's will—there is no God but God, and  
Allah is His Prophet.  
Woe is me, O my sister, for the miseries that  
are come upon thee,—  
Already thou hast heard thy fate, and hid thy  
face in anguish ;  
Thy crown of splendor thou hast cast aside,  
and stained thy sad eyes with weeping,  
For thou hast placed thy pearly hand in the  
hand of the unbeliever,  
And wedded thyself to Sorrow, yea—for ever  
and for ever.

## NESCIO

THERE are legends innumerable of Moorish maidens won to Christianity by captive lovers throughout the long history of the Hispano-Moslem wars, so, borrowing the material for the following poem from no one isolated instance, it has pleased my fancy to clothe some of the fairest places I have seen in Spain with a simple story—of love and proselytism interwoven.



## NESCIO

### I.

#### I

THERE is a spot where the impetuous wind  
Descends not ever—where the winter rains  
Are laid as lightly as a morning's dew  
Strown by the breath of Summer—cloud-kissed  
    mountains,  
Deep-precipiced, pine-laden, forest-clad,  
Circle the valley where this fair spot lies  
Even as an imitated paradise,  
Lesser—yet not less lovely,—and their fountains  
Go winding ever in bright courses bent  
To bring the glad earth timely nourishment ;  
Vineyards, dark olive-groves, broad orchards pied  
With orange-bloom and almond, and a turf  
O'erset with ferns and garlanded with flowers,  
Where in and out meandering brooklets move  
Tracing a passage like a noiseless weeping  
Over a cheek in bliss or sorrow, so  
These silent silver-burdened brooklets go,  
And every rivulet through the greensward peers  
Like a fair joy that veils itself in tears.

## 2

It is indeed an echoed paradise  
Meant to be met by mortals' raptured eyes,  
For modulated winds and tempests clear  
Gird it at every season of the year—  
Seldom the larger storm-clouds drift anear,  
Seldom those skies elysian sullied are  
Save by the Sun, or moonbeams, or a star.

## 3

'Twould little seem so pure a spot could be  
The seat of sorrow in captivity,  
Yet so it was for wights whose toil was plied  
To carry water from the river's side.  
Like clap of thunder on unclouded day,  
Like noise of war where husbandmen should be  
Minding a gentle prospect peaceably,  
Like bird of prey with sweep of cruel wings  
That on some guileless neighbourhood down-  
springs,  
And with starvation's strength, and angry stir  
Of bloodshot eyes and talons sinister,  
Lights on the vicinage of pleasance fair,  
Or mild sheepfold, or conies' braky lair,  
Seemed the sad presence of strong fetters here  
Where, as I sang, Heaven smiled so near.

4

Christians were these, who by long slavery  
Wrought their sure wage of immortality—  
Young men were they, and old; some who for  
years

Innumerable had upborne their cares,  
Vying in patience with that one dear Lord  
Who did His life-blood for themselves afford :  
Others were slender striplings, yet unbent  
By grief and toil and rude imprisonment :  
And one upon whose mild and fearless brow  
The light of God's own presence seemed to  
glow,

Tall and erect, of gentle mien and high,  
(For he was of Castilian chivalry  
Descent), in battle fearless constantly,  
Resolute of faith, devout and innocent,—  
A peerless youth, whose name I mind not, so,  
To fancy yielding call him Nescio.  
Even his Moorish gaolers must revere  
That courage grave, and unreproachful air.  
Now as it happed he with sore wounds was  
spent,

Won on Zahara's dizzy battlement,  
And, for he flinched not, nor such toil denied  
As to his comrades was distributed,

These, for dear love of him, and pity great  
Of his unhealed hurts and perilous state,  
Had begged their masters deftly, one and all,  
His share awhile might on their shoulders  
fall.

He suffered not at first, till on a day  
Coming uphill he fell, and fainting lay,  
And after that for many a weary while  
He was unfit to ply such heavy toil;  
Yet, for his captors were not wholly dead  
To mercy's dictates, he was suffered  
To rest him by the rivers or the shore,  
To gain him strength to ply his drudgery more.  
He would unguarded be, for fetters grim  
Closer than any gaoler tended him.

## 5

It followed by the border of a stream  
One gentle morn his paining limbs were laid,  
And he was idly watching sun and shade  
Playing together in each flowery glade  
Like youth dark-visaged with a fresh-faced  
maid,  
Till by a chance he drooped his eye upon  
A fallen leaf, and in his hand it took  
And cast it on the bosom of the brook.

6

And on its tremulous quest it issued forth—  
 But slowly first, and like a bathing child  
 Afraid to feel the water, till it grew  
 By custom braver, and adventured far  
 Over the bright tempestuous tiny ocean,  
 In mimicry of merchantmen that dare  
 The sinewy buffets of a larger main,  
 Borne many ways, to this port now, now that,  
 Of osier islands bedded in the stream,  
 Till lured to visit a too shining haven  
 Where little rapids rippled o'er a stone :  
 Here for a while it lay—then on a sudden  
 Dipped once, and swirling to the current's  
 strength  
 Was swept away and taken from his sight.

7

And Nescio cried a little bitterly—  
 "Are not we all as was this trivial thing ?  
 Ah me ! what may we do to help ourselves ?  
 Our lives are but as leafy ships that sail  
 An idle hour across a treacherous pool  
 Save that from ships we differ in that we  
 Bear not a profitable merchandise  
 In our dim struggles to Eternity,

Only, like them, we wait the wave's caprice,  
 Or breathes one small gust sturdier than the rest,  
 And dips the bulwark—so the tiny frame  
 Falls over, sinks—and is destroyed for ever!

## 8

"A hopeless imperfection is a thing  
 Disgraceful to its Maker and itself.  
 Are we not imperfections—all of us?  
 We are not born but some uncleanly growth  
 Begins to fester in our brains and bosoms  
 Making us rotten—is it use to live  
 In idle imitation of the skies,  
 The seas, the mountains, that so innocent are,  
 No mortal, that must die, shall copy them?  
 We might indeed mend, but a thousand things  
 More potent than ourselves are interposed  
 Between our every action, that we may  
 Never be cleansed, never be complete."

## 9

But as he voiced such saddened thoughts and  
 drear  
 Swift lighted Hope and came his soul anear—  
 Sweet Hope, and Shame to tremulously go  
 Past Faith's abode such evil realms unto.

So dark misgivings melted, and there crept  
Content instead, and on his bosom slept ;  
And wish for prayer, and thankfulness to make  
Him speak these braver words for Christ's dear  
sake.

10

"Our Father hath not shaped us to be  
Artificers of such poor subtlety  
Of speech—sophistical excuses—small  
Indeed to Him that is the Lord of all,  
Who gave us eyes to see what beauty lies  
In the broad world—its peerless excellences  
Of sound and silence, sweet varieties  
Of the day-shows and night, seas', lands', and  
skies'  
Rhythmical march, and intermingling harmonies,  
The provident Springtime and the Summer days ;  
Have I for these not any word of praise ?  
No rapt appreciation ?—what are we  
To quibble at our undivinity ?  
My proud heart must be humbled, that I go  
In voyage secure, self-girt with love and peace,  
Floating in innocence to Heaven's near harbour,  
Pointed by gentle Hope and urged by Faith  
Wafting me on with her ambrosial breath,

While sings my spirit ever and alway  
 This hymn of praise unceasing, night and day—  
 “O God, when in this spacious world there be—  
 Framed for us all—such Earth, such Heaven,  
     such Sea,  
 So blest a force—so pure a Trinity—  
 It is a gift Divine, a priceless power,  
 To be—to live—to last from hour to hour.”

## II

Lo ! from the further margin of the stream  
 A noiseless figure stood regarding him.  
 It was a Moorish maiden, whose dark eyes  
 Dwelt on the Christian with a mild surprise ;  
 His face was kindled, and his voice's stress  
 Filled her with strange and sudden happiness.  
 The clangor of his fetters seemed to be  
 Even as angels' distant melody,  
 Following the beauty of his prayer's intent  
 In more than mortal accompaniment.  
 God sent an influence through that leafy glade  
 And breathed upon the spirit of the maid,  
 Who felt her eyes with tears and pity dim  
 For Nescio's fate, and knew she worshipped  
     him.  
 So many times and oft are mortals bent  
 To be some wondrous, heavenly instrument.



INTERLUDE

1

Dear at all times is the Southern Day,  
 Nature's most bright and ageless progeny,  
 Wearing the hours as in a diadem,  
 Turning their jewel-splendor till the Sun  
 Kindleth or one or other like a gem;  
 But when her voyage pure and dance are done,  
 And scorching winds are laid, and sultrier heat,  
 Nor with the quick noon-fires her pulses beat,  
 Dearest of all to quiet hearts is she  
 As to her couch she goeth peacefully;  
 She tireth then, and longing for her rest  
 Droops her bright head and moveth to the  
 West.

2

Once on an eve the city I have said  
 Viewed the clear progress of her footsteps sped  
 Unto those chambers where yon fiery power  
 Waiteth and watcheth for his paramour.

3

Soon had she doffed her glories one by one  
 And on the lap of Even laid them down,  
 Her sheeny vestment, given by the Sun,  
 More fair than any maid of earth might own,

Ethereally wrought of delicate air  
O'erbroided by the sunbeams with a rare  
Elaborated workmanship ywis  
Lacier than that of gauzy-winged ephemeris,  
In colour changeful as chameleon's dress,  
And every colour is a loveliness  
That veileth not, but is embodied in the bright  
Imperishable fabric, yet at night  
This is dissolved and of each radiance shorn,  
To be new-woven by the breath of Morn.

## 4

Came the soft Night and by degrees o'er drew  
Her vaporous robe past hills and valleys blue,  
A cloak divine, diaphanously clear,  
That lets be seen all objects far and near,  
To where through watery bright interstices,  
An undisturbed sea-dominion lies.

## 5

A wind Æolian blows in tempered tones,  
Softly attuned, delicately sung,  
Over that empyrean, and along  
The visionary bourne where sky and sea  
Meeting together mingle amorously,  
Lit by the Sun, or planet nautilus

Tranquilly fair, exquisitely forlorn,  
 Sleeping in idle iridescence shorn  
 From moonbeams mild, or an unconscious star,  
 Or moving meteor, or a crimson bar,  
 Or gold, or purple, poised in the charmed west—  
 One of those lamps that light the Sun to rest,—  
 Until the morning lends it glories new,  
 Many an untried flame and virgin hue,  
 Many an echo of earth-fallen dew,  
 Many an unwrought, quintessential gem  
 Irradiate from the Day's new diadem :  
 So when the creature mortals call a shell  
 Hath gleaned all those ecstasies that dwell  
 In Heaven, it drifts on spirit oars or wings  
 Into that realm of immaterial things,  
 Being dissolved in some unseen haven  
 Like a pale cloud that fades in fires of even.  
 Meanwhile with ordered host and bright array,  
 Of that deep realm that underlies the day  
 The tranquil denizens wend their noiseless way,  
 Golden, or with such colourings as are  
 Distilled from rainbows or a fixed star,  
 Through pearly vapours passed and to our eyes  
 Present as more than human harmonies.  
 Scarce though they stir, yet answering ripples  
     lave  
 Each crystal path and coral architrave,

Setting in turn harmoniously to swing  
 Sea-asphodels that from those still floors spring.  
 So fare these ever, and unclouded lies  
 Their clear and spacious ocean-paradise.

---

## II.

## I

Down the long silence of the sleeping street  
 Came the soft tread of maiden's sandaled feet.  
 By many a space of white and glittering wall  
 Trailed the faint echo of that light footfall,  
 By many a portal, many a reja dark,  
 In dim recess and screened from moonlight  
     stark ;  
 Under a frowning archway till she passed,  
 Open unto a courtyard, where aghast  
 She paused awhile, and sighed, and shrank to  
     see  
 Captives a-slumber housed in such misery  
 On the chill pavement ;—ever and again  
 A prisoner would start and shake his chain,  
 Dreaming, I doubt not, of old days gone by—  
 Of home, and friends, and love, and liberty—

Till suddenly to sorrow he awoke  
 And with a sob resigned the night air broke :  
 But in a corner lay the one she sought,  
 Remote from all ; her anxious hearing caught  
 The whispering rhythm of his even breath,  
 So knew she that he lived—else as in death  
 He seemed—so pale, so delicate, so still,  
 With minished frame, and features worn and ill.

2

Now came one forth to meet her, broad and high  
 Of stature, with a dark and angry eye,  
 Who marked her gazing toward the pallid face  
 That lay unmoving in that doleful place.  
 But when he knew the person of the maid,  
 Her high degree and wealth, his steps he stayed,  
 And bade her enter and be not afraid.  
 She from the snowy bosom of her dress  
 Took somewhat forth, and in a deep recess  
 Into his hand it slipped,—he let her go  
 With noiseless tread that sleeping form unto,  
 And for the merit of the money's proof  
 Turned him away, and stood from them aloof.

3

Half-doubtful of her untried power stooped she  
 And touched him on the forehead tenderly,

Who at the touch into a smiling broke  
 With wondering eyes wide opening, so awoke.  
 "I heard you praying by the river side,  
 And pity felt" (and as she spake she sighed)  
 "That wounded youth, and in such evil stress  
 Should be forlorn, and chained, and comfortless."

## 4

Upon her words he to his feet uprose  
 Viewing her wonderingly, like an one that goes  
 Into a stranger-land and silent steals  
 Through paths unknown, and fear of ambush  
     feels,—  
 But the kind moonbeams showed a face so pure  
 As made him of her goodwill amply sure.  
 "I thank Our Heavenly Father, my sweet maid,  
 For those fair words thou to my heart hast  
     said."  
 She caught with heedful ear that answer dear,  
 And sighed again, and shed a silvery tear,  
 Clasped her small hands and at his feet down-  
     fell,  
 Whispering soft words, and how she loved him  
     well.  
 He raised her, and the dark hair from her brow  
 Put back with half-caressing hand, as though

To kiss her face, and strain her to his heart—  
Yet loosed his touch and straightway stood  
apart,

Saying, "She that would wed me must embrace  
The one pure Faith that leadeth unto grace,  
And tread with penitent steps that narrow  
way

That is our beacon to Eternity."

She made no answer for a little while,  
Then raised her face to his—an angel's smile  
It wore—her eager eyes with tears were dim  
As towards her love she leaned and clung to  
him—

"My faith—my life—I freely to thee give—  
Unto thy trust—for thy sake I believe."

5

Weak creatures are we, altered in an hour  
To other natures by some transient power  
Of thought, or speech, or sense misunderstood,  
Whether for joy or sorrow, ill or good.

Weakness it may be—or a forethought great  
Of Heaven, to pave for us some blissful state—  
An ordinance whereby God's voice may flow  
From creed to creed triumphantly, and so  
A reconciling force to all men prove,  
Unmaking hate, or moulding it to love.

Speaking in whispered tones that loving twain  
Wrought their bright work of faith and love  
    amain

In sweet commune and dear companionship  
By many a night, till early rays would tip  
The cloudy curtain of the altering sky,  
And passed the fair Dawn, laughing as she went,  
And scattering golden flowers for the feet  
Of newly-married Morning and the Day.

---

Men say that when the Christian king had ta'en  
Those cities back, from Denia to Jaen,  
That erst the Moor for centuries untold  
Did in his infidel embrace enfold,  
From one that on the azure, tideless sea,  
Echoing its beauty and tranquillity  
Lies, came a captive forth to Ferdinand,  
Leading a Moorish maiden by the hand,  
Telling of her conversion unto Life,  
And how they would be wedded man and wife,  
Gaining a glad consent that nuptials near  
Should make them one—for God had heard  
    their prayer.



Many a stronger place hath ceased to be  
 Under the Catholic's artillery—  
 Many a more invulnerable power  
 To lombards grim hath crumbled in an hour ;  
 But God outspake, and still that city lies  
 As lasting as its overlying skies—  
 For there was lit one lamp of the true Faith  
 That is the bold antagonist of Death.  
 Blest is that spot and evermore shall be  
 Cherished of Heaven—to Eternity.

## THE LAST SIGH OF THE MOOR

It needs no artist's eye or hand to image the melancholy parting of Boabdil el Chico—most unfortunate of monarchs—from his loved Granada. Have we not all, at one time or other, parted from something we had been accustomed to consider dear, and our own?

There is still shown, near to the edge of the Vega, the spot whence the miserable king—"El Zogoybi, the Unlucky"—deposed, despised, a realmless exile, viewed for the last time his precious lost inheritance, with the Christian drum, and trumpet, and artillery sounding triumphantly in his ears, and the Banner of the Cross waving proudly from the ramparts, the ramparts of Allah's chosen—and forsaken—city.

It is a pathetic name that an imaginative people have given to that historic hill-top—"El Ultimo Sospiro del Moro"—nor will that last sigh of the Moor be easily forgotten, for in the very stillness of its passion was rung the death knell of a mighty empire.

## THE LAST SIGH OF THE MOOR

ALLAH is great ! Loved city, we must go  
From these dear precincts other worlds unto.  
Allah is great ! We bend our footsteps—where ?  
To bliss or grief ? I know not, neither care.  
Allah is great ! Farewell, O myriad loves  
Of thee and thine—ambrosial orange-groves  
By fretted dome, and snowy minaret,  
And shadowy court, and murmurous fountain set.  
O song of bird, O glad unclouded skies,  
Our joys ye were—that are lost ecstasies.

Peerless and purest—Stronghold of the Faith,  
Live thou to brighter moments—we, to Death ;  
Only, to comfort us on Life's drear strand  
Let Memory come and take us by the hand.  
Let Memory whisper—what shall never die—  
Thy thoughts and praises, oft and tenderly ;  
So blunt thy loss, though swept from us for ever  
On the swift tide of Fate's unpitying river.

I have no strength to bid my soul advance  
Over Life's desert—on thy countenance  
My stricken eyes would still their vigil keep.  
Fain would I mourn, yet have no heart to weep.

One look! the last! I go from Heaven to Hell—  
Earth is before me—Paradise, farewell!

## GUITAR SONG

(FROM "TERESA SANCHEZ")

THEY tell me tales of Aragon,  
Of proud Navarra, far Leon,  
And Castile's broad dominion.

Hey ! hey ! well enough are they  
Of the North to the mind  
Of a chilly northern hind—  
Hey ! hey ! but I pine away  
For the soft south wind  
With his song so kind,  
In the sun of a southern day.  
Laughing Andalusia—she  
Dearer is than all to me.

They tell me tales of Cordova,  
They say that Vasco cities are  
Broad and beautiful—but far  
Fairer still is Seville—she  
Pearl of cities is to me.

O come with me—O come with me  
Maiden, soft I'll sing  
To the leaves light whispering,  
Under the shade of a saffron-tree,  
Or an orange-orchard's canopy  
In an Andalusian Spring.

## THE BEGGARMAN

(FROM THE SPANISH OF ESPRONCEDA)

MINE is the world—a kingdom free—  
I reap what other men have sowed,  
I learn the ready charity  
On them that ask an alms bestowed.

In palace fine I dream or dine,  
Or cabin lowly—both are mine,  
From shelter safe I hear  
The tempest stroke that lops the oak  
Upon the mountain drear.

The fields, the valleys flooded are,  
It matters not—I wage no war  
With sun or storm, I take no harm—  
I laugh, and clamber higher  
To shepherd's welcome kind and warm  
By warm and welcome fire;

Or chimney-corner cosy brings  
The wafted scent of savoury things  
At tables of the great,  
And on the cates that to and fro  
Those loaden tables come and go  
I sup, and sup in state.

Then thus I speak — "Howl on with might  
and main  
Tempestuous wind and angry hurricane"—  
Under the creaking of the timber dry  
Apart from hate or love I slumbering lie,  
Mine is the world—a world of liberty.

Prince and peasant, lord and hind,  
Welcome me in word and kind,  
And for their weal I pray—  
Yet thank them not, it is but due  
That those who have my prayers should so  
Their benefactor pay.

For poverty, her charge so dear,  
Doth Heaven protect with love sincere,  
Swift to avenge, and sure,  
Yea, times there are to try the heart  
Of wealth, and sift its greed apart  
That God Himself turns poor.



By poverty I live, and pity gain  
From those who soften at the sight of pain.  
Mine is their wealth, they dare not me  
deny,  
I have but to demand and I obtain—  
Mine is the world—a world of liberty.

Proudly apparelled, bright and gay,  
Each perfumed beauty is my prey—  
I follow where she takes her way,  
And in her footsteps press ;  
I make her halt, I make her hear  
My wants, my woes, I make her fear  
My claim importunate, and drear  
Malodorous distress.

In filthy rags, with visage dark and sour,  
Vengeful I tread upon the heels of power—  
Where men make merry and rejoice,  
With song, and dance, and cheerful noise,  
My squalid self with dismal voice  
Breaks in upon their bliss.

Delight and Anguish, Pleasure swift and Pain,  
How near they dwell, how close together ;  
How short a space steps in between  
The fine and wintry weather.

No hope, no fear, no work, no play,  
No joy for me, no sorrow,  
No thought of Life, or Death, or Birth,  
No yestertide, no morrow,  
No biting care by night or day ;  
I reckon not, be my destiny  
The Hell or Heaven of Earth.

From memories, from cares apart,  
Live on, live on, untroubled heart ;  
In whole security forget  
More glittering aims—let others sweat  
For gold, for glory's fabled sway ;  
My only thought is for to-day,  
My only aim the purer power  
To beg my bread from hour to hour.  
O kings and laws may come and go—  
My strength is in my poverty,  
My wealth, my wisdom, for I know  
My blest estate is better far  
Than politics or princes be.  
My wants my gold, my glories are—  
My power is over them that thrive—  
God's creature I, through fear they give.  
My home is where my heart would be,  
Beneath the wide air's liberty,  
Mine is a couch in hospital,

And when this ragged frame shall fall,  
I'll draw my latest breath,  
And take my rest on earth's broad breast—  
Unfettered, e'en in Death.

Mine is the world—the open air—  
The pence that wrung by others be,  
The foods that other hands prepare—  
For love of God and charity  
I ask and earn them—everywhere !

## THE SONG OF THE PIRATE

(SUGGESTED BY THE "CANCION DEL PIRATA"  
OF ESPRONCEDA)\*

THE shotted cannon's on the deck,  
The sails are set, the wind is free,  
And bravely whistles, shrill and clear,  
Lashing us onward cheerily—  
And thus sing I, the buccaneer—

*My schooner is my darling dear,  
Her sails are set, the wind is free.*

Never a nation but must reckon  
That where the spumy seas are spread,  
Those wide and watery wastes I tread  
From end to end, and brave with me  
My battle hazard; never yet  
A mariner but in me has met

\* I have made no attempt whatever to *translate* (as that word is vulgarly understood) the *Cancion* itself, but only to paraphrase the dominant idea.

His overlord, and bowed his neck  
Unto the skipper-buccaneer.

*My schooner is my darling dear,  
Her sails are set, the wind is free.*

The doleful demons of the blast  
(The sails are set, the wind is free),  
Scraping the shrouds my fiddlers are—  
I love them well, the hurricane  
Thumping the bosom of the main  
Bangs me his drum ; the groaning mast,  
The piping voices of the gale,  
The echoes that among them be,  
The bubbles that about them veer,  
The thunder hoarse, the pattering hail,—  
Each stormy noise from near and far  
Maketh my ocean orchestra—

*And my schooner is my darling dear,  
Her sails are set, the wind is free.*

Ye blind, besotted kings of earth,  
Who buffet for an inch of filth,  
What are your base ambitions worth ?  
What say ye to the sounding deep ?  
I am its emperor ; envy *me*,  
That over its dominion keep  
Inviolable rule,—the tilth

Of vasty ocean's azure field  
O'er royal acres richly sown  
Is mine and only mine,—its yield  
My harvesters the breezes bear  
Unto their pirate-lord alone,  
To gather in his granary,—

*My schooner is my darling dear,  
Her sails are set, the wind is free.*

Through life and death my nimble bark  
Full-merrily I fight and steer,  
Without a thought, without a fear.—  
*The pirate has no perils,—hark !*  
The tempest bellows to the deep  
And snaps the spar and smites the shroud  
That screeches, smitten,—now is my sleep  
Sweetest—

*My schooner is my darling dear,  
Her sails are set, the storm is loud.*

## LIFE IS SLUMBER

(FROM CALDERON'S COMEDY, "LA VIDA ES  
SUEÑO")

TAKE my word for it, we are  
In a sphere so singular  
That to live is but—to dream,  
And experience teaches me  
That we *are* not—we but *seem*  
Living, moving, breathing men,  
Till in Death's sleep we wake again.  
Kings dream their power—by this deceit  
They bend the rabbles at their feet—  
Their famed applause they do but borrow  
To scribble on the winds—the morrow  
Sees it—and them—dissolved away ;  
Their fame is air, themselves are clay,  
And both are damned in a day.  
Then who would seek to rule, to reign,  
That in Death's sleep must wake again ?  
The rich man dreameth of his hoard—  
More cares than all that doth afford ;

The pauper dreameth that he is  
The victim of his miseries ;  
And he that boasts advancement's hour,  
And he that wields a tyrant's power—  
These dream of all Life's dream hath wrought ;  
Of dreams, not Life, they fathom aught.

I dream that I by Fate am bent  
To suffer this imprisonment—  
I dreamed that in another state  
I viewed myself more fortunate—  
O what is Life ?—a shadowy thing—  
A fiction—an imagining—  
Whose greatest blessing is but small  
Indeed—infinitesimal,  
That it is but a state wherein we seem  
To sleep—*where dreams are but the phantoms  
of a dream.*



FROM CALDERON'S COMEDY, "LA  
DAMA DUENDE "

DON Juan Toledo is, O worthy Cosmé,  
My very best of friends : I think, indeed,  
So rare and close an union must be  
The cynosure and envy of the world,  
Where friendship is at issue—for in youth  
We students were together, together braved  
In riper life the bloodier ways of war,  
Combating side by side ; in Piedmont  
What time the noble Duke of Fera  
Gave me command, a part of it to Juan  
I gave, to guard my flag as officer ;  
And when his wounds were deep, on my own  
    bed  
I laid and healed him, so that his very being  
He oweth most to God, but next to me.

FROM THE "RIMAS" OF GUSTAVO  
BECQUER

SIGHS are air, to air that go ;  
Tears are water ; into seas they flow.  
Say, woman, say—when loves forgotten be,  
Knowest thou whither away they flee ?

FROM THE "RIMAS" OF GUSTAVO  
BECQUER

OUR passion was a pantomime,  
In whose grotesque development  
The sob and laugh would interchime,  
And tears and smiles commingling blent.

A pestilence upon the play,  
For as the fatal curtain fell,  
I drew in tears my bitter pay,  
But she in silvery laughs as well.

## VERSES

(FROM THE SPANISH OF GUSTAVO BECQUER)

I AM a maiden of southern blood,  
Dark, and eager, and passionate,  
That rolls and leaps in lecherous flood,—  
A devil to love thee,—a devil to hate—  
Seekest thou me ?

*Maid, not thee.*

*My* forehead is pale, *my* locks are gold,  
I am fair of feature, and form, and tress,—  
I drink to thee, pledge thee joys untold,—  
My bosom's a garden of tenderness,—  
Callest thou me ?

*Maid, not thee.*

I cannot love, *I*, image, dream,  
Shadow—that is—that cannot be—  
Bodiless breath, that mortals deem  
Corporal air, *reality*,—  
I cannot love thee,—have a fear—

*Come to me—come—thou phantom dear.*

## A LEGEND OF LOVE AND DEATH

(FROM THE SPANISH OF HURTADO DE  
MENDOZA)

AT a lodging house, they say,  
Love and Death put up one day,—  
Love (as is his wont) awaking  
Ere the earliest breezes blow,  
Feels his fellow-farer's bow—  
Death's—his careless touch mistaking  
Other's armor for his own—  
Shoulders it and off has flown,—  
True, his blindness was to blame,  
Yet the miracle's the same,  
Since later on uprising Death  
Shoulders Love's and nothing saith—  
Saith or seeth—so on they dance  
Ignorant both of all mischance :

From the blunder of those two,  
Love and Death, we plainly see  
Each unconscious doth undo  
His opponent's policy.

Love should thrill the veins of youth,  
Death the aged should inter,—  
All's topsy-turvy now—in truth  
You shall notice oftener  
While peevish, aggravating eld  
Wantoning in Love's arms is held,  
Youth it is finds sepulchre  
Dismal, dark, and premature,—  
And amorously bent we find them  
Who drag Life's longest loads behind them.

THE END.

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## THE LAND OF THE DONS.

LONDON: CASSELL & COMPANY, LIMITED.

The warmly favourable criticism of both the British and the Spanish press appears to show that "THE LAND OF THE DONS" is the most exhaustive, faithful, and amusing description of Spain and the Spaniards that has yet been published in the English language.

Subjoined is a selection from the criticism in question:—

Mr. Williams is a most entertaining and instructive cicerone.  
—*Daily News*.

Mr. Williams knows Spain well, loves the country and its people, and when he writes about Spanish politics and social questions is at once interesting and informing.—*New Age*.

Mr. Leonard Williams discourses on "things Spanish" as one who knows and is in sympathy with his ever-fascinating subject, and who wields the pen of a ready and clever writer.—*Scotsman*.

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His style is vigorous . . . and he presents much valuable information about the people. . . . Mr. Williams' notes on the popular literature are of interest . . . gives an amusing account of Spanish law. . . . The last three chapters . . . are devoted to the history and politics of Spain, and contain a full record of the Spaniard's attitude towards the graver national problems which he has now to face.—*Outlook*.

No more readable book about Spain has appeared for many years. . . . To his intimate acquaintance with Spain and the Spaniards the author adds sympathy, insight, and, best of all, humour. The book glows with colour.—*Daily Mail*.

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It is a relief and a pleasure to come across a book full of intimate experience, and written by a practised hand. . . . In this book he gives an animated account of the daily life of modern Spain, many details of it being surprisingly intimate. . . . We have not space to enumerate all the interesting phases of Spanish life Mr. Williams describes. But we should not overlook his three excellent chapters on the national sport. The bull-ring interests Spain so completely that Mr. Williams feels the subject deserving of many more chapters than he has allowed it. We almost wish that he had given rein to his inclination and written more. The bullfighting chapters are the most interesting in the book. He gives a particularly close description of a typical contest at the Plaza de Toros, in Madrid. This is really an exciting bit of reading, and, we confess, has interested us more than ever in the character and the merits of the sport. . . . The book everywhere brings modern Spain very near to English eyes.—*Liverpool Mercury*.

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The author of "The Land of the Dons" was formerly *Times*

correspondent at Madrid, a circumstance which partly explains the excellent English of his text. . . . His book contains every evidence of painstaking observation and research. Though full of detail, the volume is not a mere catalogue. The manners and customs are entertainingly described. The bullfight and its history, the national *fiestas*, the daily life of a *bourgeois* family are similarly dealt with. The numerous illustrations, from original photographs, give accurate and interesting views of the types by which Spain is peopled. . . . Full of information new to the majority of English people.—*Sheffield Independent*.

Knows Spain like a native. . . . With the life of the city and the life of the remote and romantic little villages he is equally familiar.—*Black and White*.

Leonard Williams, who has been resident in Spain for some years, has supplied a graphic description of the country and its inhabitants. . . . In his chapter entitled "Retrospective and Ethnological" the author outlines clearly the causes which have made the races of Spain differ from each other, and gives a fluent description of the main peculiarities of the inhabitants of Cataluña, Aragon, Andalusia, Castile, Extremadura, Leon, Navarra, Vizcaya, Murcia, Galicia, and Asturias. The task of delineating so many diverse types was not an easy one, but Mr. Williams has accomplished it very successfully. . . . This volume is made peculiarly attractive by the profuse illustrations, a large number of these having been finely reproduced from photographs by Mr. Williams. Even to look through these pictures of gorgeous palaces, magnificent cathedrals, and varied types of the races that make up the composite Spanish nation is educative.—*Dundee Advertiser*.

It is refreshing to have an account of Spain and her peoples from a writer who can speak from the knowledge gained by residence and careful inquiry. . . . Well-developed studies of life and character, of past conditions, present aspects, and future possibilities. Mr. Williams has a graphic pencil, the power to say a good deal in a few words, and a gift for picturesque arrangement alike of facts and fancies. . . . A readable and informing book, and one, too, with the advantage of many excellent "process" illustrations, and a helpful glossary and index.—*Leeds Mercury*.

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exhaustive account, descriptive and historical. Mr. Williams also has much to say that is suggestive about the future of Spain. . . . The book throughout bears evidence of intimate and extensive knowledge, and is attractively written.—*Birmingham Daily Post*.

It is to combat this ignorance on our part, and this lack of interest, that Mr. Williams has written this exceedingly interesting and attractive book on Spain. He has been long resident in the country, has visited most of its various provinces, and has enjoyed exceptionally good opportunities of studying and knowing the people, ruling classes and commons. . . . As we have said, there is not a little truth in our traditional picture of the Don, but when a still fuller portrait is drawn for us by Mr. Williams' careful and graphic pen, we get interested, which in this case is half-way to sympathy and respect. After a couple of chapters on ethnological and geographical details, presented with graphic brevity, and enlivened with many a little touch or episode from personal experience, he paints for us a charming picture of a day spent by the various members—male and female—of a *bourgeois* family. . . . Manners and customs, old and new, take up a couple of long chapters—music, dancing, dress, cookery, eating and drinking, quarrelling—of which, alas! there is enough and to spare, with too often fatal results from the savage use of the knife—mendicancy, superstition, and charity, are all described with vivid and informative touches, and illustrative incidents and anecdotes. Another chapter describes the national *fiestas* and the bullfight in its present form, and its historical origin and developments, with bright and appreciative accounts of its great heroes and present-day exponents, fill two long chapters. . . . In the last three chapters he settles down to a more serious discussion of Spanish history . . . written with great sympathy for Spain, but with exceeding frankness, and the picture it presents is a terrible one.—*Aberdeen Free Press*.

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A fascinating work, replete with little anecdotal "asides," dealing with the life and customs of an exceptionally picturesque and subtle nation.—*Sun*.

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are. . . . Naturally a book about Spain must deal with bull-fighting, and Mr. Williams goes into the matter thoroughly in three of the longest and most interesting chapters in the book. At the same time he expresses no opinion as to the cruelty or morality of the sport. He sets it in all its aspects before the reader, with a wealth of picturesque colouring, and leaves him to draw his own conclusions. Other most interesting chapters are those dealing with manners and customs and folk-lore, all very quaint and curious. . . . Whether discoursing of princes, beggars, scenery, sport, or politics, Mr. Williams is always interesting, and the copiously illustrated volume he has given us is one of the best productions of its kind we have seen for a long time past.—*Lloyd's Weekly*.

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When Mr. Leonard Williams writes about Spain he writes as a full man. He knows the country, its history, its people, their strength, and their weakness. And, as Mr. Williams writes always both interestingly and picturesquely of that which he knows, the result is a fascinating book about a fascinating country. Spain's history he recites in a few vigorous chapters, and everything that he writes about—the habits and customs of the people, their popular literature, and their popular amusements, is done in a way which brings these things before the eyes of the reader. . . . The book is well and profusely illustrated.—*Newcastle Daily Chronicle*.

Mr. Williams has done for Spain what Du Chaillu did for "The Land of the Vikings." Living among the people as one of themselves, he has become thoroughly familiar with their daily life and their habits. Thus he has gathered at first hand ample material for a pen-picture of the nation, and he has used his material with literary skill. He writes graphically, informatively, and with much humour, worthily fulfilling his aim—"to produce an intimate and trustworthy account of Spain and

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This pen-picture of modern Spain is drawn with skill. . . . The literary style is picturesque but restrained, with only here and there an ornate passage which is very well done, and a very large canvas is used. From the chapters "Retrospective and Ethnological," and "Introspective and Geographical," we arrive by easy stages, rendered short by pleasant descriptions, at the more intimate concerns of the people. The Mosque of Cordoba is a stately building, and its memories of the Moor stir a hundred romantic fancies of poesy and chivalry, but we pass from these old-world themes, and turn to the exciting chapters on the bull-fight, its history, and its amenities. These are written so vividly that the whole of the brilliant and brutal scene passes before the reader with almost the realism of a cinematograph. . . . Elsewhere the author achieves considerable success in describing quieter phases of Spanish life. . . . The book is copiously illustrated, and there is an extensive glossary.—*Northern Whig, Belfast*.

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There are few, if any, writers who have drawn such a true picture of Spain and its inhabitants as the author of "The Land of the Dons," and certainly, as far as our memory carries us, we do not remember to have read a more interesting book on that country.—*Golden Penny*.

The book is worth careful study by any who wish to travel in Spain. The last chapter, on "The Future of Spain," is eloquently written, and convinces the reader that the resources of the country only require reasonable care in direction to bring the Peninsula back to prosperity and power.—*Art Journal*.

Valuable volume.—*Britannia*.

In Mr. Williams's pages you may live the life of a Spanish family of the middle-class in the capital or study the manners and customs and costume, in all their variety, of the most picturesque peasantry in Europe. . . . All through you have the feeling that the work is *véu*—that you have before you the assimilated results of long familiarity, not the raw and hasty conclusions of the casual tourist.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

Mr. Leonard Williams has the happiest of styles for the work which he undertakes in "The Land of the Dons," a large, handsome, well illustrated, and exceedingly interesting volume on Spain and the Spaniards from every point of view, published by Messrs. Cassell and Co. The predominant note of the Spanish character, and of Spanish life generally as it appears to English readers, is picturesqueness; and it is the author's ability to write of the picturesque in fluent and vivid language that renders the book so pleasing. The daily life of the well-to-do Spanish merchant and his family is set forth in charming detail.—*Daily Graphic*.

Varied and valuable information . . . To Mr. Williams' book must be given leisure, sympathy, understanding, patience; and the result will be found well worth the expenditure.—*Court Journal*.

His book may be divided into two parts. . . . The one deals with the country, its inhabitants, their differing characters, aptitudes, manners, and customs; it gives us vivid pictures of Madrid life and of life in the country; it tells of popular literature, of the great festivals, of the games and amusements, of the ball-play and of the bull-fight. To this last and to its history three chapters are devoted. All this is excellently done: the author knows his subject and how to treat it. We are in agreement on almost every point. . . . The book is well worth reading: it is far above the productions of the tourist, written as it is by one who has made Spain his adopted country. The photographic illustrations are good, and there are an excellent glossary and index.—*Spectator*.

Mr. Williams tells us that his aim has been to produce an intimate and trustworthy account of Spain and the Spaniards, and we must congratulate him upon his complete success, for many as are the books that we have read on the subject, we do not remember one which has interested us to the same extent as

this, or has conveyed to our mind so realistic a picture of the "Land of the Dons." The writer has lived in Spain for a number of years, where he acted as correspondent to the *Times*, and has in consequence a thorough knowledge of the country, for it is evident that he is a keen observer of men and things. He passes in review the inhabitants of the various provinces, detailing their costumes, peculiarities, manners, and customs. He writes of the popular literature of the country, and describes in graphic language the innumerable national fiestas and the games and pastimes of the people. The greatest and most popular of these is, of course, the bull-fights. . . . The majority of our readers have, doubtlessly, read many a description of a Spanish bull-fight, but if they would have a true picture of the scene, with its diversified colours, its movement, dust, shouting, and excitement, we should strongly recommend them to peruse Mr. Williams' spirited account of this national fiesta. From the beginning the book is full of interest. Moreover, it contains numerous illustrations, the majority of which are from photographs taken by the author.—*Graphic*.

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The book gives a large, detailed, and deliberate view of the Spaniards by one who evidently knows them well, who has learned them by heart, and can write of them with an affectionate pen.—*English Illustrated*.

It must be admitted, at whatever cost of personal humiliation, that one effect of this book is to show how very little even the tourist who has "done" Spain knows of its many peoples. In his sympathetic, exhaustive, and extremely entertaining chapters on the bull fight Mr. Williams shows himself rather more Spanish than the Spaniards. The book is well illustrated and well worth reading.—*Vanity Fair*.

A thoughtful, veracious, and illuminative account of Spain.—*Westminster Review*.

Mr. Williams has some considerable advantages over the majority of the writers on Spain whose names figure in the elaborate bibliographies of M. Foulché-Delbosc and Dr. Fari-nelli. He does not attempt to produce a rival to "Across Spain on a Bicycle," or "A Motor Trip from Irún to Gibraltar," but he has lived for some years in the country, has studied the local customs, has learned the prevailing language, and is in general sympathy with what is called the Spanish temperament. . . . His information is generally exact, and his reflections are shrewd. He is at his best when he describes Madrid and the Madrileños. He knows the city thoroughly, spares us extracts from the

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We already knew of this work from the notices in the English papers, all of which agree that "The Land of the Dons" is admirably written, and discusses our national customs in a competent manner. . . . Chapter III., "A Bourgeois Family in their Daily Life," is one of the most vivid and interesting in all the volume. Mr. Williams is a keen observer, and excels in the power of picturesque description; so that we are enchanted with his minute account of our home life, depicted by means of the imaginary family of Don Pablo. From the moment this gentleman takes his chocolate in bed, until, after the game of *tresillo*, he sees his friends downstairs at night, the whole of his household passes before our eyes. The hairdresser, the marketing, the gossip, the afternoon walk of the young ladies, escorted by their manna, in search of a sweetheart, the squabbles with the slavey—not a detail is omitted. . . . Chapters IV. and VI. discuss the manners and customs of the Spaniard, and sandwiched between them is a short account of Spanish popular literature. . . . By reason of their novelty, these chapters should interest English readers very greatly, since they give pleasure even to ourselves, accustomed as we are to the matters which Mr. Williams describes in such detail. . . . Chapter VII., devoted to the Spanish national fiestas, is also very lively and exhaustive. The *verbenas*, the Carnival, the Romeria of San Isidro—all pass before the reader's eyes, and should not fail to please and interest the author's countrymen. . . . The next three chapters contain a complete and technically written study of the bull-fight, including every detail that the keenest enthusiast could desire. This part of the book is the least attractive to a Spaniard, for he knows it all. Englishmen, on the contrary, should regard it in quite a different light, since

they are wholly ignorant of our national sport, and the little that other books on Spain have said concerning it had better been left unwritten. . . . The volume is well got up, and must, we cannot doubt, be warmly welcomed in Great Britain.—*Nuestro Tiempo, Madrid.*

Here we have, at last, a non-Spanish writer who in producing a book on Spain has not considered himself obliged to accumulate one fable upon another. The French have made us familiar with every kind of yarn . . . . Merimée half a century ago, and in these times Richépin, Maurice Barrés, and Pierre Louis. We fail to understand it; for the French, after all, are not such fools as they look. . . . Mr. Leonard Williams has lived among us for years, and speaks our language fluently. . . . His book, a trustworthy study of our customs, tells to us Spaniards but little that is new. It is a faithful likeness of ourselves. The author describes us as we are, hitting off with singular exactness the characteristics which distinguish us from other peoples. . . . His style is graceful, light, and pleasant. The chapter called "A Bourgeois Family in their Daily Life," embodies just that mingling of exact description and of delicate humour which immortalises Dickens. The whole book discloses a sincere esteem for us, as well as a tender irony; both of which qualities are betrayed by the happy title, "The Land of the Dons." We are consoled for this gentle irony by Mr. Williams's erudite chapter on our popular songs. . . . In a word, we find this volume a faithful and conscientious study, based upon extensive literary research, keen observation, and warm affection for our country.—*Diario Universal, Madrid.*

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